

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4873

INFO AMCONSUL MILAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 18683

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, IT

SUBJ: VISIT BY CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC OFFICIALS: BARUFFI AND CARLI

REF: STATE 296387 AND PREVIOUS

1. FOLLOWING SOUNDINGS HERE IN ROME, WE BELIEVE IT DESIRABLE TO PROCEED WITH FACILITATING US VISIT OF BARUFFI AND CARLI. SUCH A VISIT COULD BE A POSITIVE FIRST STEP IN AN OVERALL COORDINATED COUNTRY-WIDE APPROACH TOWARD ACQUAINTING DEMOCRATIC POLITICIANS WITH THE TECHNIQUES OF AMERICAN POLITICAL CAMPAIGNING.

2. DURING MEETING EMBOFFS HAD WITH SIGNORELLO DECEMBER 19, HE EXPRESSED INTEREST IN IDEA OF EXPOSURE OF DC POLITICIANS TO MODERN CAMPAIGN TECHNIQUES. HE NOTED THAT FOCUS OF CURRENT POLITICAL ACTIVITY WITHIN DC ON PLANNING FOR THE PARTY'S CONGRESS IN MARCH PRECLUDES ANY SERIOUS EFFORTS IN THIS DIRECTION UNTIL THE SPRING. MEANWHILE, HE SUGGESTED THAT EMBASSY APPROACH D.C. VICE-SECRETARY ATTILIO RUFFINI, WHO IS CHARGED WITH ORGANIZATIONAL QUESTIONS, TO OBTAIN HIS SUPPORT FOR MORE CONCRETE NATIONAL EFFORT IN THIS DIRECTION. EMBASSY INTENDS TO PURSUE THIS SUGGESTION WHEN POLITICAL ACTIVITY RESUMES FOLLOWING HOLIDAY PERIOD.

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3. HOPEFULLY, SUBSEQUENT DISCUSSIONS WILL SUCCEED IN DEFINING FRAMEWORK WITHIN WHICH WE CAN PROCEED IN THIS EFFORT IN COOPERATION WITH OUR ITALIAN POLITICAL COUNTERPARTS. MEANWHILE, LIMITED SCOPE AND PRECISELY DEFINED OBJECTIVES OF BARUFFI AND CARLI, WHO ARE WILLING TO ASSUME FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THEIR TRIP, SHOULD OFFER US OPPORTUNITY TO EXAMINE FEASIBILITY OF CONTINUING WITH THIS IDEA IN A WIDER CONTEXT.
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